9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

offending person. Similar stones have been used to work beneficent magic in the case of expectant mothers. Here the symbolism may be that of the child in the womb, but there are other cases where it is obviously phallic. Sympathetic magic would appear to be the explanation of another custom, that of carrying away in a cloth and making into various concoctions, some of which were drunk, the earth from the grave of a holy man. The drink was regarded as a cure for human sins or for disease in cattle.

The megaliths themselves are known to have been held in veneration as givers of fertility and curative agents. The same virtues attach to certain solitary stones, for instance some holy wells have " healing stones " which are used to touch the affected parts of the body. Standing stones with a perforation (" holed-stones ") are said to have been used in sealing marriage contracts. Megaliths are also considered the haunts of fairies, which, some students affirm, are to be regarded as ancestral spirits inhabiting the burial places and awaiting an opportunity to be born again. Alternatively it is thought that belief in fairies is a folk memory of ancient peoples of small stature. It is hardly necessary to say that belief in fairies is firmly held in many parts of the country : I have seen quite recently boys dressed in girls' clothes as a protection against fairy theft, for the " wee people " are liable to exchange their " changelings " for healthy boys—a belief which is perhaps an attempt to explain the high mortality of male as compared with female children.

It has more than once been my experience to be refused permission to excavate megalithic monuments from the owner's belief that bad luck would follow. Country people will not touch the trees that grow on ancient burial sites, for instance they will not even use fallen branches as fuel. This reluctance to interfere with the abodes of the dead provides a charitable explanation of the neglect from which many Christian burial grounds suffer. Incidentally it is worth remarking that archæologists have often shown by their discoveries that hazel wood and hazel nuts played a consider-

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

able part in the ceremonies of megalithic burial: we remember 764
the significance attached to hazel nuts in the Hallowe'en games 824
of divination (Chapter 17).

The ancient raths or forths, earthen enclosures around old 776
homesteads, are also favourite haunts of fairies, and many 789
are the tales of mysterious happenings in their neighbourhood 829
at night, and of signs of habitation and sweet music issuing
from them. Protection from fairies is believed to be obtained 778
by possession of a black-hafted knife, while oatmeal or oat-
cakes are also specifics against their malign influence. From
fairies as from witches the supreme hour of peril to mortals is
at the eves of Beltane, Midsummer and All Hallows. Cattle
afflicted with disease were believed to be "elf-shot"—the
belief is not entirely dead—and flint arrowheads were pro-
duced as proof of the attack. The cure was to give the
affected animal a drink of the water in which the arrow had
been placed. Among other archæological relics the polished
stone axes of the Neolithic and Bronze ages are known as
thunderbolts and are accredited with healing powers, and the
small spinning-whorls are termed fairy mill-stones. As
Arthur Mitchell writes of Scotland: "It is believed that
stone celts assist the birth of children; that they increase
the milk of cows; that they cure the diseases of the eye;
that they protect the houses in which they are kept from
lightning; and that they have many other such marvellous
virtues. It is believed that, as they have a sort of super-
natural origin, they may reasonably be supposed to have
supernatural powers."

When food is taken out of doors it is a common belief that 776
some must be left behind for the fairies, otherwise the dreaded 789
"hungry grass" will grow; and the countryman will often
spill a portion of his drink as a perhaps unconscious libation
to the wee folk. Their activities are peculiarly dangerous to
cattle and to butter-making. Among the charms designed to
secure a good supply of butter in the churn we find the use of [751]
a horse-shoe, of a rusty nail from a coffin or the hand of a
corpse, of rowan branches, salt, a live turf, or a cross made of
VERONICA leaves.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

visits ranging in length from one to seven weeks between 1961 and 1966 to complete our project. During the 19 months that we dwelled on the island, most of our research was directed toward documenting the contemporary culture of Inis Beag: its technological, economic, political, social, religious, esthetic, and recreational aspects. We also investigated informal and formal education and the personality traits created by it, reconstructed Inis Beag history of the past century by examining historical materials of many sorts and probing the memories of elderly respondents, and recorded cultural change in process.

The research techniques that we employed are standard ethnographic ones: the guided and open-ended interview, external and participant observation, collection of life histories, photography, and phonography. Two departures from methodological orthodoxy were our use, as projective devices, of literary works and a sixty-two-verse ballad that I composed. A dozen islanders of both sexes and three age groups read at our request three books portraying Inis Beag culture, and we recorded and analyzed their varied responses. My ballad, now embedded in the island folklore tradition, is based on a shipwreck and rescue off Inis Beag that we witnessed, and a series of incidents which ensued during the following months. Alterations made by local singers after it was completed and the reactions to it by the islanders gave us insights into Inis Beag culture and personality which would have been difficult to obtain under other circumstances of fieldwork. I must add that the ballad was a product of exuberant cultural involvement and the satisfactions of "creative endeavor." Its research implications were unanticipated.

The Inis Beag islanders qualify as folk people in almost every respect, according to anthropological definition (Lewis 1960:1): the population has maintained its stability for at least two hundred years; there is a strong bond between the peasants and their land, and agriculture provides them with the major source of their livelihood; production is mainly for subsistence and is carried on with a simple technology, which includes as primary implements the digging stick, spade, and scythe; the island folk participate in a money economy, but barter still persists; a low standard of living prevails, and the birth rate is high; the family is of central importance, and marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare; the island is integrated into the county and national governments and is subject to their laws; the people long have been exposed to urban influences, have borrowed cultural elements from other rural areas on the mainland, and have integrated them into a relatively stable system; and, finally, the experience of living under foreign rule for over three centuries has created in the islanders an attitude of dependence and, at the same time, one of hostility toward the government which continues to this day. The only conditions in Inis Beag which run counter to those in most other peasant groups are low death and illiteracy rates. The Irish shun the term peasant as applied to individuals or communities, for the same reason that elitists in developing countries eschew the term primitive as applied to traditional cultural forms found in societies incorporated into newly formed states. The causes of this attitude must be examined next.

During the past hundred years, Ireland has experienced a vigorous nativistic movement—provoked by seven centuries of English domination, linked with nationalism as the Irish sought to assert their independence, focused on the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

is a three-story tower house with its south and west walls partially destroyed. The middle story of the castle rests on vaults, and there are carved corbels projecting from the north and east walls. It is believed that the castle was assaulted in 1652 from the land side by Cromwellian troops, who disembarked at the back of the island and hauled their heavy cannons across the limestone pavement, unimpeded by the stone fences which stand today, to the monastery above the tower.

Queen Elizabeth annexed Inis Beag for the Crown in 1586 because of its strategic position, after two contending Irish families had appealed to her following their fierce battle for its possession, in which all of the folk may have been slaughtered. From 1586 until the first decade of the eighteenth century, Commonwealth, Loyalist, and Williamite forces were stationed in Inis Beag most of the time, and until 1886, when obtained by the Irish Land Commission, the island was owned by a succession of absentee Anglo-Irish landlords. When Cromwellian troops forced the surrender of Loyalists in 1652, the population of Inis Beag once again may have been decimated, although one legend holds that only males were put to the sword. The island after 1655 became a port for transshipment of clerics who were exiled to the West Indies. This was the time when Cromwell revenged himself on Irish Catholics and their Protestant allies by appropriating for his followers more than half of the Irish soil and leveling harsh political, commercial, and religious penalties. Thousands of priests were banished, including all of the bishops for a time, in his crusade.

It was after the Restoration in 1660 that the land of Inis Beag was divided into quarters, half-quarters, and smaller units and assigned to families. My genealogical research reveals that all of the families of Inis Beag trace descent from immigrants who arrived in the island during and after the last half of the seventeenth century. The early arrivals, as well as any survivors, may have intermarried and interbred with soldiers posted in the island, for anthropometric and blood group analyses (buttressed by surname and historical evidence and local legend) show that the folk more closely resemble the northern English than they do their mainland cousins. A Dublin humor magazine featured a cartoon, not favored in nativistic quarters, showing Inis Beag men in traditional attire playing cricket.

The islanders still express considerable bitterness over the conditions of poverty and servitude experienced by their ancestors during the 300 years that they lived under alien landlords. All of the excesses of foreign domination suffered by mainland peasants were suffered by Inis Beag folk, but were aggravated by the ordinary hardships of island living. Little is known of local events in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, until the island was "rediscovered" by Petrie and O'Flaherty. There was trading between Inis Beag and communities along the mainland coast for many miles, and ships passing by often dropped anchor at the island; but at that time this region of Ireland was very much isolated and seldom visited. A military garrison once again was established in Inis Beag for a brief period during the Napoleonic Wars, when the English feared an invasion of the British Isles from the west by French forces. A watch tower was constructed on the island, one of a chain along the Atlantic coast of Ireland, to give early warning of invasion.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

2

The Land and the Sea

Standard of Living

THE STANDARD OF LIVING of the folk has improved vastly since the establishment of the Irish Land Commission in 1881 and the Congested Districts Board ten years later, and the islanders are better off today than the inhabitants of some other areas of the Gaeltacht. In 1891, the Congested Districts were delineated as regions in which the population did not possess sufficient land to maintain life except at an extremely low standard. Between that year and 1951, the population in the districts declined 42 percent—from 541,000 to 367,000 persons. The few areas which would rank as congested now, on the 1891 basis, are mainly in Cos. Donegal, Mayo, and Galway (Freeman 1960:121–123). A vigorous and continuing effort to stem the tide of emigration, in part caused by poverty, led the commission, the board, subsequently the Gaeltacht Eireann which replaced the board after 1925, and other government agencies appointed in this century, to improve the standard of living by various actions: the enlargement of land holdings for more effective farming, the encouragement of small factory and domestic industries, the improvement of fishing, the construction of public works, and the introduction of various subsidies. Seasonal laboring in England, often practiced out of necessity by mainland farmers but not by the islanders, and remittances from relatives who have emigrated are income sources which also have served to alleviate poverty; but the major palliative throughout Ireland has been emigration. One of the factors limiting migration from Inis Beag to the mainland until recent decades was the low standard of living which prevailed in the country at large. An islander could not escape local hardships and privations by emigrating to urban centers as he can today; he had to turn his back on Ireland.

Most Inis Beag people believe themselves to be materially poor, although they resent others agreeing publicly with this view. A well-known Dublin newspaper feature writer in 1963 was denounced, and a vow made not to permit him to

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

511
• 829 come ashore in the future, for his use of the term poverty when describing Inis Beag life in a series of articles. The islanders, however, constantly complain of their indigence privately and deprecate it and are embarrassed by it in the presence of strangers. Girls and young women are particularly disparaging, and elders are puzzled by this attitude because the lot of youth is so much easier than was that of their mothers and grandmothers. Those persons who extol island existence usually do so in a defensive manner; after conceding that goods are in short supply, albeit "no one suffers from want of food or clothing," they go on to stress the healthy climate of the island, the freedom and independence that they enjoy, the sanctity of Inis Beag and its many saints of the past, and the strength of Catholic belief. Sometimes the advocate is followed by a denunciation of urban life, where these essential characteristics are lacking, or by a recounting of the difficulties being encountered by a relative just arrived in Boston or London.

433 The subsistence economy of Inis Beag always has been dominated by agri-
241 cultural pursuits, contrary to frequent assertions by writers that farming was
233 subsidiary to fishing two generations ago. Most householders own land on which they grow potatoes and other vegetables, grass, and sometimes sally rods, and where they pasture cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and asses. Potatoes are the staple crop, and after they are harvested the land usually is seeded with grass and used as pasturage for a number of years before being replanted. Indigenous soils bearing grass at the back of the island also serve as pasturage, and horses and asses at times
[262] are permitted to roam the trails and common land to forage whatever they can from the meager flora there. Supplementing potatoes in the diet are various vegetables, milk from cows and nanny goats, meat from island sheep and poultry,
[342] fish, and other foods, many of which are imported and sold in the shops. Rye is
[343] grown for thatching houses and contiguous outbuildings, as well as barns located
[493] south of the terrace crest, and sally rods are used to weave several types of containers. The only vehicles in Inis Beag are three two-wheeled carts employed to transport heavy loads, such as building stones, along the rough and narrow trails. Most householders own asses or horses, often ridden, which carry burdens in baskets
433 or pull carts. Other subsistence activities are knitting, weaving, crocheting, tailoring,
28 shoemaking, and net making, although the last skill almost has died out.

433 A slowly expanding cash economy features the export of cattle and sheep
[437] reared or fattened in the island and of surplus potatoes, the collection of seaweed for extraction of its iodine content at a mainland factory, the manufacture of
[28] craft objects, and the keeping of tourists in private homes. Among the craft commodities produced are cable-knit sweaters, miniature *curach*, stockings knitted at the local factory in the coast guard station, and articles of clothing worn by the folk—woven belts, cowhide shoes, and shawls. These goods are sold both to visitors
[667] and to middlemen who resell them in Ireland and export them abroad. The cash economy is buttressed considerably by government subsidies of many sorts and
[651] by remittances from emigrant kin. Not only are income and property taxes not
[429] collected in Inis Beag, but rents are extremely low, both of which conditions rep-
[124] resent indirect government subsidization. Income information is as difficult to come by as data concerning pagan supernatural beliefs, disputes, and sexual atti-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

household. Some cats have reverted to a wild state and roam the back of the island, sheep occasionally are killed by hungry dogs, and young people will entertain themselves by baiting dogs to fight. By and large, animals, especially asses, in Inis Beag are treated roughly or with indifference.

Fishing

It is estimated that between 30 and 50 three-men crews from Inis Beag fished regularly almost the year around at the beginning of the century. At that time there were ten families of fisherfolk—six in Low Village, two in High, and one each in the other two communities—who subsisted mainly on money obtained from the sale of their catches or by bartering fish for needed goods and services. Only farming and kelp-making intermittently interfered with the fishing regime of landholders, and fishing ceased altogether only for parts of December and January, when inclement weather and the Christmas season intruded. Women and children were deeply involved in the fishing endeavor, just as they were in farming and livestock rearing, to free their menfolk for fishing. Crews ranged the coast of Inis Beag and neighboring islands, the two sounds, the mainland coast for 20 miles, and Atlantic shallows 5 to 8 miles offshore. Lines 40 fathoms in length were "shot" for ling and cod, and nets over a mile in length were drifted to ensnare spring mackerel. At times when fish were particularly abundant, fishermen would be out daily for a week or two, arising long before dawn to have their lines down before daybreak, and returning home as late as midnight.

Sixty years later, a sharply contrasting situation prevails, wherein not only has the exporting of fish almost been discontinued, but fish no longer rank as a major staple in the diet of the folk and are not even eaten several months of the year. Nine three-men crews fished fairly regularly with nets and lines between February and October of 1960 and exported or sold locally part of their catches, and two crews fished for lobsters. Fishing now is carried on within a mile of the island, and only one crew ventured as far as the mainland in 1960. It was customary in the past for crews to fish for two consecutive days off a mainland peninsula and sleep overnight in their canoes or lodge in a village there, a venture which required over 30 miles of backbreaking labor at the oars. Line fishing today is done in shallow waters, only short nets are employed, and the men do not care to spend long hours at their task. Elders bemoan the present state of affairs for several reasons, one of them being the loss of fishing lore accumulated over the centuries—knowledge of the ocean floor, of deep currents, of the habitats and movements of fish, not to mention knowledge relating to the manufacture and care of fishing gear and fishing techniques themselves.

Most important of the factors which gradually have restricted fishing are the actions of foreign trawlers—particularly Spanish and French ones, the shift of migratory routes of fish, and long range changes in the weather. During the 1890s, foreign trawlers commenced to fish the waters surrounding Inis Beag, and in the decades since they have increased in number and have fished ever closer to the coast, until now they often penetrate within the legal limit. Not only have

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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Figure 9. Launching a curach *from the strand in stormy weather*

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[648]
[133]
[132]
[601]
[829]
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they taken fish which eventually would have found their way into island nets, but they have destroyed with their trawls spawning beds of certain fish and captured lines and nets set out many miles in the ocean by Inis Beag crews. Another reason why fish have become scarce is that shifting currents or other related factors have caused some fish, especially mackerel, to bypass the region. Other coastal areas of Ireland from which fish seldom were taken in quantity in the past now are thriving, and some islanders look hopefully to the future when once again migratory routes will change and bring the fish back. However, even if fish were more available today, it would be difficult to fish for them from *curach* for part of the year because of worsening weather conditions. Storms have increased in number and severity during the winters, and even the summers which once were relatively "calm" are punctuated with long spells of "rough" weather which makes going out in the canoes risky (see Fig. 9). Finally, a seldom admitted factor also must be considered—the indolence of the men. Aged fishermen assert that sufficient fish are still available to make serious fishing a highly profitable occupation, but that young men have been "spoiled" by government benevolence and are unwilling to undergo the hardships entailed—"Why rise before dawn and row all day when you can draw the dole?" During 1959, those crews which fished the most averaged between 50 and 60 pounds per man for the season.

Whereas the efforts of the Irish Free State and the Republic to improve Inis Beag living standards have been directed mostly toward stimulating agriculture and animal husbandry, those of the government before 1922 were focused on making fishing a more productive enterprise. The Congested Districts Board intro-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

with him while fishing or be brought his dinner and afternoon lunch in the field. Infants and young children are fed milk at various times, and the youth often eat biscuits, candy, or bread spread with sugar between the five regular meals

Most women bake their own bread in "pot ovens" suspended over the open fire, with ingredients purchased in the shops, but some buy bakery bread which is delivered from the mainland once a week. Women with many offspring must bake bread daily, since as many as five loaves will be eaten in a day by a family of eight. Cream is saved from the milk and turned into butter in locally made churns every few days, to provide the pound or more of butter consumed in a week by each member of the family. A few women purchase shop butter and also margarine for cooking, but the latter is not used on the table (despite the fact that it is one-third the price of imported butter), because it is an artificial product and thus thought to lack food value. Both chicken and duck eggs are eaten, and some persons prefer hard to soft boiled eggs. Men insist on drinking their tea from large mugs and prefer their bread sliced thick and spread generously with butter. Telling of a tea that he attended in Dublin, a man complained of teacups the size of egg cups and bread cut so thin that "you could see houses on the mainland through it." Children are more prone than adults to use jam on their bread, and a large jar of imported jam will last but a day in a household containing six children.

Few families can afford to serve meat daily, and sometimes several days will pass before meat appears on the table. Among the meats eaten are lamb, mutton, chicken, and fish procured locally, and rasher and sausage bought in the shops; however, some families have beef and lamb shipped directly to them from mainland shops weekly. Meats usually are boiled, even fish, and soup and gravy are made from the liquids formed. Although lobsters, crabs, snails, and other shelled sea creatures are obtained by the folk, they are exported, used for bait, or cast aside rather than eaten. Two kinds of seaweed are included in the diet and are considered delicacies: *creannach*, which can be consumed raw as it is pulled but more commonly is boiled and dried before being eaten, and *carraigín*, which when cooked with milk makes a tasty blancmange. These seaweeds are believed to promote health and are used as folk medicines by some islanders, who regard them as having a magical potency.

The potatoes grown in Inis Beag are considered outstanding in taste, even when compared with those grown on the mainland. They are boiled in a "cooking pot" over the open hearth; this container is deeper and has a rounder bottom than its pot oven counterpart. At one time, it was customary to drain potatoes and eat them from a round, flat, short-sided basket woven from sally rods, called a *ciseog*. They still are drained with the basket in many households, but I have observed only three families eating communally from a *ciseog* atop the table. This is thought to be a "backward" custom, and a film producer earned the wrath of the folk by portraying this trait in his work; actually, it did not appear in the film, nor did other sequences, such as a women suckling a pig in time of drought, which the islanders claim that the producer included to brand them "savages." Potatoes when eaten are "stabbed" with a fork, peeled with a knife, and eaten with the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

ported on the sea only by thin canvas. Most men are able to make pampooties for themselves, but several islanders specialize in the craft and sell their wares to their fellows and to visitors. Usually cured hides are imported from the mainland, and 40 pairs of pampooties can be fashioned from a whole cowhide. They are cut to shape the foot, have the hair outside, are secured front and back by lacing, and when used daily will last about two months. To be pliable, they must be kept moist, so they are dipped in water when they become dry and hardened; however, because they are worn constantly in wet grass and sand, they seldom lose their softness.

In this chapter, I have considered all of the important means of gaining a livelihood in Inis Beag. Some I have discussed at length, while others I have touched on briefly and will reconsider later; but two thus far not referred to—piloting and recovering objects washed ashore—I would like to take up before ending the chapter. Only one pilot remains in the island, but early in the century men of several families guided vessels through the east sound to ports on the mainland. Then it was customary to place lookouts at the high points of Inis Beag to scan the horizon for masts of approaching ships, and often several canoes would race miles out to sea in order to be first to contact a potential customer. The Terrace villager who still plies the trade seldom contacts likely vessels now, and more often than not his services are refused once he rows to a ship, what with modern charts and navigating instruments. Piloting is still very much alive in the memories of the folk, and one of the popular genres of folklore is the humorous anecdote dealing with real and imagined experiences of pilots. One of these concerns a crew fishing in the east sound which was hailed by the captain of a passing schooner. Although not a pilot, an old member of the crew claimed that he was and climbed aboard, and the captain agreed to hire him after he said that he knew the sound and coastline well. Soon after, the ship struck bottom "with a great bump," and the enraged captain shouted, "I thought you said you knew all the rocks in the sound.", to which the islandman replied in a quiet voice, "I did, and that's one of them." The same old man in another tale earns the job by boxing the compass in Gaelic for the captain; the humor of this story lies in the fact that the captain does not know Irish, and the islandman, who in turn does not know the points of the compass, simply recites terms of reference[2] for kin in a rhythmic manner.

One of the oldest of Inis Beag traditions is the "law of wrack"—the right of islanders to confiscate objects of value which have washed ashore. If a person discovers wrack, he establishes ownership by placing a stone atop it or by carrying it above high water mark, and no one else will claim it. Some islanders wander along the shores at dawn seeking what objects may have washed in during the night, especially timber, and those who habitually engage in this pursuit are known disparagingly as "wrack-boomers"—so poor that they must depend on salvage. During the two world wars, the economy of Inis Beag was bolstered by the immense amount of wreckage which drifted in from torpedoed ships, and the islanders still reminisce about particular visitations of flour, planks, and other

[2] See p. 75 for a definition of terms of reference.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

361 It is apparent from the size of these settlements that some such term as hamlet might be more appropriate than village, but I have chosen to follow island usage. Within each village, no house is further than 50 yards from its nearest neighbor, some even sharing the same gable, and a myriad of paths serve to link single and grouped dwellings with a main road.

184 Although the traditions of Inis Beag and islands in its vicinity can be designated as a subculture of the Irish system taken as a whole, nevertheless there are marked differences in custom between them. One might suppose that cultural variation would be slight in an island as small and stable as Inis Beag, but [829] the remarkable fact is that there are differences among the four villages. The folk [628] are well aware of inter-village, inter-island, and island-mainland cultural variability, and they also possess a well defined image of their own way of life. At this point, I would like to examine the attitudes of the people toward their own communities, Inis Thiar, the mainland, themselves, and outsiders who visit or live among them.

829 High and Castle Villages attract the fewest opinions. The inhabitants of 628 the former are accused of arriving late at island affairs, especially to mass in the 184 chapel so close at hand, and dwellers in the latter of keeping ferocious dogs which [231] bark at night and molest visitors. Until recently, each Castle household had from two to four dogs, and it was possible for those living in Low to know when a visitor making a night visit had arrived in Castle by the outcry of the animals. [512] Castle people, like those in Terrace, milk their cows earlier in the day than do [823] other islanders, and since both settlements are located on the upper terraces and command exceptional views of the mainland coast and sea around, the dwellers in each claim that their panorama is the most inspiring.

829 The numerous attitudes toward Low and Terrace Villages mostly reflect 628 their positions in the island and resultant differential acculturation; generally 184 speaking, the local culture becomes more traditional as one moves eastward from 177 Low, the jetty, and the strand. It is often said that Terrace folk "are strangers to 178 the rest of us" and resemble the inhabitants of Inis Thiar, whom many writers and [342] scientists claim are the most traditional of Irish peasants. More cottages are [461] thatched and the indigenous costume is more in evidence in Terrace than elsewhere, and the villagers there are the earliest risers and hardest workers and tend to arrive early for events, in contradistinction to their High neighbors. Families in Terrace are considered more closely knit and cooperative and the people more [275] self-reliant than those in the other communities. The men spend less time in the pubs, do not need drink to "give them courage" to sing and dance, and are livelier and more extroverted at parties. Not only do Terrace folk believe that their village is best located as to beauty of land and seascape, but they claim that it is quieter [241] and the air is healthier there than elsewhere in Inis Beag. Another Terrace custom often cited is that of farmers using all four types of seaweed as fertilizers and setting their gardens in the same manner; farmers in the other settlements use [421] only two or three kinds of seaweed and set their gardens in a variety of ways. Lastly, the practice of seeking wrack is most prevalent among Terrace men. The freighter ran aground near Terrace, and the men there were said to have acquired more salvage than other islanders as a result of their being close to the ship and

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

inveterate wrack-boomers. The separateness of Terrace villagers was made most apparent at the time of the shipwreck through the aggression, both overt and covert, directed against them by their fellows.

The behavior of Low villagers, on the other hand, is often the opposite of that of Terrace people less than a mile away; for instance, the folk of Low are the latest risers and milkers, the least industrious, and the most prone to spend time in the pubs. They claim to be descendants of the earliest immigrants in the seventeenth century and are the most boastful of family genealogies. However, most of the landless householders live in Low and as such are held in low repute by landed villagers. People here are the most receptive to tourists, and the two pubs which attract outsiders and the several private homes in which tourists may lodge all are located in Low. It is said that Terrace folk do not need and are indifferent to tourists, whereas Low villagers could not survive without them, either economically or psychologically. Although islanders today visit nearby islands and the mainland less than did their forebears at the turn of the century, the people of Low are considered the most traveled, past and present, of the local population.

As for attitudes directed outward, most islanders regard the culture of Inis Thiar as more traditional than their own. Often heard is the assertion that 70 years ago the inhabitants of the two islands were almost alike as to behavior and beliefs, but the coming of lighthouse and coast guard families, and a permanent curate after 1919, to Inis Beag introduced successive changes which gradually widened the cultural gap between the two. Another factor of importance hindering acculturation in Inis Thiar has been its lack of good landing facilities for visitors to come ashore; the steamer must stand off the jetty of Inis Thiar in the unprotected and often turbulent sound and be met by canoes, whereas it can approach closely the strand of Inis Beag, between the jetty and a point of land, where under most weather conditions it is relatively calm.

Visitors to Inis Beag also hold the same opinion of the two cultures, and the most often made comparison between the islands is the Irish spoken in them. The people of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar recognize slight differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation between the two speech communities, but they seldom rank their respective proficiencies, unless outsiders in one island assert that the Gaelic spoken in the other is "purer." Once a tourist angered visiting Inis Thiar fishermen in my presence by publicly pronouncing that the Irish in Inis Beag is superior, and that he would send his children here to learn Gaelic and then to Inis Thiar to learn English; the tongue-in-check statement was prompted by a discussion of the linguistic skills of the publican in the neighboring island, who is called "the English speaker" because of the rapidity of his speech and chronic misuse of esoteric English words. Indigenous nativists are far more numerous and militant in Inis Thiar than in Inis Beag, and the anger of the fishermen reflected pride in their own culture and their belief that it is more traditional than that of Inis Beag.

Inis Thiar folk are thought by their neighbors to the east to be more industrious and extroverted than themselves. They are believed to rise earlier, work longer and more energetically with fewer breaks for contemplation or gossip with

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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829 passersby, and live more frugally and save more as a result. Gruff, impatient, and
often impolite, they talk rapidly in high pitched voices and shout at their beasts
[273] and at one another from a distance, and on occasion they will use profanity. Inis
Thiar men drink more than Inis Beag men, it is claimed; rather than sipping
slowly and savoring their stout and whiskey, they consume it quickly and are more
concerned with the effects that it produces. It is admitted in Inis Beag that all
Irish are inquisitive and disposed to gossip about their fellows, but islanders to
the west are openly so and will "demand" information from tourists and will
[593] discuss one another quite freely. Braver, "bolder," and less concerned with morality,
men from Inis Thiar rowed to the freighter on several occasions and contested
successfully with local folk for salvage, which caused some Inis Beag wives to
[562] deride their husbands for not possessing these qualities. Women of Inis Thiar also
are thought to be braver and bolder, and remain less in their homes, visit relatives
and acquaintances and the shops more often, and in general participate more in
social events than do their sisters to the east. Despite being extremely critical of
Inis Thiar folk for possessing the above and many other less prominent traits, the
people of Inis Beag grudgingly admit that their neighbors possess greater *esprit*
[167] *de corps* and enjoy life more than themselves. Once a person emigrates from Inis
Beag, he or she seldom returns; but Inis Thiar emigrants are "clever" and do well
abroad, and often return with earnings to remain at home, especially women who
come back with "fortunes" to seek husbands.

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186 The attitudes of islanders toward those living on the mainland—"towns-
[121] people" or "city folk"—reveal a primitivistic bias which probably can be traced
back to the Viking occupation, when towns first were established in Ireland and
primitive Celts became transformed into peasants: "that primitive people retain
a morality which civilized people tend to lose; that a man's moral worth declines
in rough proportion to his distance from the soil; that civilization must be held
accountable for man's noteworthy catalogue of vices;" (Ardrey 1961:147–148).
Inis Beag folk regard themselves as impeccably moral and mainlanders, although
fellow Catholics, as immoral; yet the "progressiveness" of the latter is envied
secretly and gives rise to the sensitivity of islanders to the real and imagined
denigration of them by mainlanders for their backwardness. Mainland Irish are
[291] thought to be overly pecuniary, dishonest, rude, and promiscuous. When visiting
towns and cities on the mainland, Inis Beag people for many years have worn main-
land attire so as not to be singled out and ridiculed. They are ashamed of their
English speech—even though adults speak the tongue with greater proficiency
than many urban dwellers—and believe that they are prey to dishonest shopkeepers,
[123] who are ever ready to take advantage of their ignorance and naiveté. Whenever
my wife and I paid short visits to a nearby port or to Dublin, we were requested by
islanders to make purchases, have repairs made under our name, and transact other
business for them because we were "too clever to be cheated." Once in the city, the
folk miss Inis Beag with its clear air and broad expanses, and they complain of
the tall buildings (seldom more than four stories high) which "press in" on them,
the bustle of the main street, the curious stares of townspeople, and the dirtiness
of buildings and roads. In claiming that few islanders would prefer to live there

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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by choice, an old woman said, "City folk are always troubled. They aren't their 186
own bosses, and they get up too early and work too hard. They face the dangers of traffic, and, worst of all, they meet with temptations of the flesh."

In the last chapter, I discussed two facets of the Inis Beag self-image: their seldom admitted poverty and indolence. Other facets have just been revealed in their appraisals of various groups, and still more are apparent when one examines their attitudes toward visitors to the island. During the summer, they enjoy the 609
presence of strangers on the strand at steamer time, in the pubs, and at parties, and when winter comes many conversations dwell on those who were "great gas" —entertaining in song, dance, or repartee. But outsiders fulfill a far deeper need, in that most of them express admiration for the island and its inhabitants. They praise the beauty, antiquities, and history of Inis Beag, but more importantly the friendliness of the people and those customs and personality traits publicized by writers and film producers, which are "discovered" even when nonexistent or considerably "diluted." Departing tourists usually vow that they will return, and they are asked repetitiously what it was that so pleased them and if they will be "lonesome after they leave." Reflected here are the profound feelings of inferiority [156]
of the folk and their need for constant reassurance of their worth. Much of the depression among islanders during winter months is related to the absence of outsiders who stimulate them and are subjects of gossip.

The people of Inis Beag regard themselves as friendly, polite, and hospitable 829
to outsiders—not at all like their Inis Thiar neighbors, who are said not to like 609
tourists and to extort money from them for giving information and allowing themselves to be photographed. Strangers never are derided for behaving in a disapproved fashion but are "treated with dignity," although some men will try to gain free drinks and other favors from outsiders in a calculating and beguiling manner (called "being cute" in Ireland), which is frowned on by the majority of folk. During the summer when tourists are plentiful, many islanders behave according to the nativistic and primitivistic expectations of the strangers: attire becomes more traditional and newer costumes are worn, canoes are rowed with greater vigor, conversations become more boastful, and the like. The sensitivity of the islanders to nativism and primitivism is quite selective, however, in that they extol certain of their indigenous customs and are ashamed of others. Actions which give credence to such character traits as spirituality, strength, and courage are exaggerated, while those which belie such traits as independence, self-reliance, and industriousness are carefully hidden. My wife and I kept a careful record of the responses [125]
of Inis Beag folk to questions that we posed concerning their history and culture when we first visited the island in 1958. More than 40 replies turned out to be erroneous, and some of them would have done credit to the most ardent nativist or primitivist.

Most tourists who visit Inis Beag share a mystique fostered by interpreta- 000
tions of island life in the works of writers and film producers. A similar mystique is found elsewhere in the world among idealized primitive and peasant peoples. In Inis Beag, it often causes visitors to seek acceptance from the folk, to resent the presence of other outsiders, to boast of their intimate knowledge of Inis Beag customs, and, in some cases, to "go native" in so far as circumstances permit.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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Strangers who spend weeks or months in Inis Beag and are able to grasp some of the realities of life there often leave emotionally distraught, knowing that they 609 never will be accepted by the people. Acceptance by the islanders is a problem faced by not only outsiders, but by immigrants. The latter remain strangers for two or three generations, and some people, particularly descendants of fisherfolk, are regarded as outsiders despite the fact that the families of some have resided in [152] Inis Beag for almost a century. Later we will learn that the islanders have difficulty [602] forming affectional bonds among themselves, even among kin; thus, they are able to give even less of themselves to those "who do not belong." Strangers who know Inis Beag well often complain that they must do all of the "giving," as the folk can only "take."

The islanders also share attitudes toward other individuals and groups, which I can mention only in passing. Among the most important are those concerning outsiders who have lived in Inis Beag for long periods of time (the expatriate Dane, lighthouse keepers, Brendan Behan the writer, and Siobhain McKenna the actress); writers who have composed works about the island and have dwelled there or are folk themselves; particular persons from Inis Thiar and other nearby islands (a policeman, a teacher, a man of great strength, a keeper of a guest house, and a man who provides taxi service between the islands and the mainland in a small boat); peasants from bordering counties; religious groups (Protestants generally, members of the Church of Ireland, Jews, and even Italian Catholics); ethnic and racial groups (Americans, English, Germans, Negroes, tinkers, and foreigners as a class); and, finally, politicians and government bureaucrats and the Irish press.

609 I know of but few cases of discrimination practiced against any of these, • 829 but prejudices held against some of them abound, based either on historical 186 experiences (with the English and the Church of Ireland) or on views inculcated by returned emigrants (concerning Jews and Negroes, who seldom visit Inis Beag). [123] Islanders, as well as most Irish, are ambivalent about "Yanks," as visiting emigrants from the United States are called, but are mostly critical of them; often my wife and I have been asked on first meeting an Irish person whether we are Irish-Americans or "real Americans," and when we have admitted to being the latter we have been well received. Conversely, we have seen Yanks shunned on revealing their pedigree. They are accused of "lording it over" their Irish kin and friends.

Formal Social Control

000 Anthropologists customarily classify social control systems as formal and informal. Formal systems are governments whose controls are based on physical violence or its threat—physical punishment, ostracism, banishment, and extermination; while informal systems include sanctions of a religious or economic nature and those exercised by primary groups—gossip, ridicule, persuasion, and opprobrium. Controls of a negative nature are buttressed by positive rewards, such as services provided by a government or the feeling of security gained from primary group approval. It is not the formal system of local and national governments

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

It is not the formal system of local and national governments which exerts the most control over the behavior of Inis Beag islanders, but rather the church whose clerical representatives impose supernatural sanctions more potent than the threat of extermination. Indeed, because of the marked theocratic tendencies of the church in the Republic, and the all-powerful political role played by the clergy in Inis Beag, it is tempting to label the church a formal agency of social control. The island certainly comprises a primary group in the sociological sense, with its diminutive size and population, and the sanctions imposed by the folk on one another sometimes rival in effectiveness those of the parish priest and curate.

The widespread peasant trait of dependence together with hostility toward government is most pronounced in Inis Beag. Aid in a variety of forms constantly is sought and even expected as an obligation, or "right," of the government by the islanders (especially since nativism engendered by the Gaelic Revival has made Inis Beag "the darling of the Gaeltacht," to quote a Dublin scholar who is a bitter foe of the language movement), but they are either apathetic or antagonistic toward the local and central governments. When asked to account for their anti-government sentiment, the folk of Inis Beag cite most often the commonplace nepotism and corruption practiced by functionaries, the slight differences between the platforms of the major Irish parties—Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, the promises made by politicians which seldom are kept when they achieve office, the misapplication of programs once implemented, the inadequacy of government services, the burden of increasing taxation and inflation, and "foolish" government projects in Inis Beag, more often than not instituted without consulting the islanders.

Today, the folk seldom pay heed to election promises, but once their votes were commanded by politicians who put forth grandiose plans for the betterment of local conditions—such as lengthening the present jetty or constructing another to accommodate the steamer, and connecting the fresh water lake with the sea to form a sheltered harbor for trawlers—which never were realized. Popular subjects of conversation are the shortcomings of the postal, medical, transport, and other services, and the steady increase of taxes—on stout and tobacco in particular —and the price of imported turf. Among the government projects criticized by the islanders are seaweed drying structures and lime kilns which seldom or never have been used, road improvements made where they were not needed and not made where they were needed, and the new school and jetty whose sites were misplaced by civil servants who failed to seek local advice as to the vagaries of wind and tide. The school is in danger of becoming inundated with sand from the common land, and is near the strand where activities distract the attention of the pupils; and the pier is not located in the most protected position that the coastline affords. Anti-government feeling is but a part of a much broader anti-authority configuration, which extends to the clergy, to high status folk, and even to parent-child and sibling relationships within the family. It has been for many centuries a component of Irish basic personality structure and has had momentous repercussions on the course of Irish history.

The political apathy of the islanders is revealed in their voting behavior and their knowledge of political figures and issues. Election of councillors to the county council takes place every two years, and election of members to the Dail

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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666 (the lower House of Parliament) every five. Candidates for the Dail occasionally visit Inis Beag to campaign briefly, but candidates for the county council seldom do because of the lack of interest shown in local elections and the small number of voters. In the last local election, approximately 60 of 194 eligible voters cast ballots, while the previous national election attracted slightly less than 100 voters. Two clerks from the island supervise the voting, which takes place in the school between nine o'clock in the morning and nine at night, five days before the rest of the nation votes. No more than a handful of the people are politically aware [521] and committed enough to campaign actively among their fellows. Political discussions animate the island a week or two before an election, but most of the people are poorly informed about the records and platforms of candidates and [665] parties. Estimates vary as to the strength of the parties in Inis Beag; Fianna Fail receives anywhere from 50 to 90 percent of the votes cast, according to various respondents, whereas Fine Gael receives most of the rest with Labour a very weak [177] third. The tendency among the folk is to vote party rather than politician, although the fortunes of Fianna Fail have depended largely on the popularity of aging President Eamon de Valera; "Dev" is regarded as "cute," not to be trusted, and vacillatory, but his fame outside of Ireland, which reflects to the credit of the nation, is the all important criterion of judgment among the local electorate. Some islanders have urged voters to interest themselves more in the local than national elections, arguing that many services and subsidies are provided by the county council, and its elected representatives can be "supervised" more closely than their Dail counterparts.

65 The local and national governments impinge on the lives of the folk most importantly through the many services and subsidies which are provided by agencies of the two bodies and implemented by visiting or locally appointed or hired functionaries. I have made reference already to certain government commitments: the language program and knitting industry, both underwritten by Gaeltacht Eireann, several of the agricultural measures supervised by Department of Agriculture representatives, the life saving company maintained by the Coast Life Saving Service, maintenance tasks performed by island men hired by the Irish [624] Lights Service, and the post office and national school. Mention also should be made of the doctor stationed in a neighboring island, the local agent of the Irish Transport System who oversees the unloading and loading of cargo shipped on the steamer, and the islander who serves in three capacities as county council agent, supervisor of road improvements under the Special Employment Schemes Office, and bailiff. As bailiff, he signs official forms for the folk, can take an offender into custody and set bail, and must sign a warrant before the police can make an arrest in Inis Beag.

625 There are no police, called *gardaí* and "guards," in the island, but three, including a sergeant, are posted in a nearby island and visit Inis Beag at least
674 once a month. Crime is virtually unknown among the folk, the few cases on record [683] being for assault and battery and destruction of property; most cases are civil ones, [684] involving property ownership and inheritance, and are tried intermittently by a
829 visiting magistrate. The guards are subjected to frequent criticism and derision,
625 especially when they come to the island dressed in plain-clothes to search for
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16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

unlicensed dogs, or when they discover a still on the mainland and arrest the "poor creatures" who were manufacturing "poteen" (illicit whiskey). They sometimes are called "peelers" in reference, a derogatory term assigned to their predecessors, the Royal Irish Constabulary, founded by Sir Robert Peel. (The Irish chose his surname to immortalize and the English his Christian name—"bobbie.") Seven verses of my ballad satirize the much resented role of the police during the aftermath of the shipwreck. The absence of guards in Inis Beag means that the pubs can stay open after legal hours, sometimes until two or three o'clock in the morning; and in the island where the police are stationed, one must enter the pubs after hours, if permitted, by the back door and drink sitting on the floor.

The *Guide to the Social Services*, published by the Dublin Stationary Office in 1959, lists under 76 headings the multitudinous services and subsidies provided the Irish people by local and central governments. Among the most important to Inis Beag folk are: Widow's Pension, Old Age Pension (called "the old age"), Unemployment Assistance (know as "the dole"), Children's Allowances, General Medical Services, General Institutional and Specialist Services, Mental Treatment, Disabled Persons Maintenance Allowances, Maternity and Infant Services, Free School Books in National Schools, Employment and Special Emergency Schemes (which include road improvement), Agricultural Education, Schemes of Agricultural Development, Gaeltacht Eireann Schemes (which include housing and language subsidies), Private Housing Grants and Loans, Local Authority Housing, and Land Commission Housing. Most of these programs are handled by civil servants who visit Inis Beag from a nearby island or the mainland, and at any time during the year there is usually at least one government agent conducting his business in the island. The services and subsidies are welcomed by the folk even though seldom considered adequate, and only one arouses bitter antagonism: elders dislike the law which requires them to will their land at age 70 before they can go on the old age, as well as the probing of functionaries who request personal information of potential old age pensioners, especially information about remittance monies which might disqualify the applicants. Almost all of the islanders are on the dole, and few express outwardly embarrassment or shame as regards the fact —"The government has a right to give us the dole."

Informal Social Control

The informal social control system of Inis Beag comprises the parish priest and curate, the headmaster of the school—chosen and strictly regulated by the parish priest, and a "king." The position of king is not hereditary and not supported by a majority of the population as in some other Irish islands, but is self-assumed and based on a number of factors to be considered shortly. Not only is king strictly a term of reference, but it is employed by the folk only when they are most critical of his actions; it also is used by certain outsiders who are frequent visitors to Inis Beag and are aware of the power structure there, but always out of earshot of the islanders.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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dies suddenly and is deprived of Extreme Unction at his deathbed. The compensatory rite performed later for the deceased who has been interred while the curate was away is thought to be less efficacious in shortening the stay of the soul in Purgatory.

In the past, the amount of social control exerted by clerics has varied; a few have been concerned mostly with fulfilling their religious duties, but the greater number have attempted in a variety of ways to regulate the lives of the islanders —to restrict such activities as visiting, gossiping, courting, dancing, and drinking spirits. The curates have tried, in general, to maintain the indigenous culture, especially the Gaelic tongue, and to discourage change, halt emigration, maintain the moral standards of the folk, and limit anti-social behavior. I have heard both islanders and curates defend the *status quo* in Inis Beag, including its poverty, by asserting that, "This life is of no importance, and its suffering must be borne for the glory of Heaven to come." In the absence of local police, curates sometimes have performed the functions of *gardaí*, and since 1960 have combatted a growing rash of juvenile delinquency, which has included, among other misdeeds, the destruction of property outside of homes in which parties are held, petty theft, and molestation of girls from the mainland who visit during the summer.

The techniques of social control utilized by curates are many and mostly negative; they include weekly sermons, lectures to students in the school, talks with individuals who need guidance or reprimand, the use of informers (a word so detested in Ireland that I have substituted respondent for informant in this book) and confessions, the allocation of indulgences, and, in extreme cases, the refusal of sacraments and the placing of curses. It is difficult to overestimate the degree of fear of the clergy and anti-clericalism which have been inculcated among the folk by the more immoderate measures employed by priests during the last century. Sermons deal both with spiritual messages based on the scriptures and church pronouncements, and with instruction and censure directed toward past or anticipated actions of the islanders in concert or of particular persons. Talks with individuals may take place in their or the curate's home, and often result from information received by the priest from informers or the confessional. The informers, it is said, are usually the housekeeper of the curate and her family, and children who are intimidated by the priest to reveal talk and behavior of their parents and others; however, certain folk are known to bear tales to the clergy and are shunned for this reason. Well aware of the power that the confessional gives the priest over their lives, islanders are outspoken in its condemnation, and many will not confess particular sins, especially those of a sexual nature, to a curate known to assign severe penances and to carry matters beyond the confessional.

The awarding of indulgences represents a positive social control method and has been used frequently, I was told, to obtain needed monetary contributions and services from the folk. Although the priest cannot excommunicate a recalcitrant parishioner, he can achieve the same objective by forbidding confession and absolution and the other sacraments to him, and the islanders report its threat and use as a sanction on several occasions in the past. Even more feared is the "priest's curse," which in Co. Clare ". . . can bring ruin upon a prosperous house; can turn an unbeliver's head upon his shoulders; strike blindness . . ." (Arensberg 1937:28).

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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In Inis Beag, it is called "reading the Gospel (or Bible) at," and can bring illness or death and ultimate damnation within a prescribed time; the folk reason that if a cleric can cure with prayer, he also can cause illness and death by its use.

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One other control technique of the clergy must be mentioned—that of influencing civil servants to implement their wishes. One case among many that I recorded, based partly on rumor, will serve as an example of its potency. A middle-aged, unmarried man who anticipated inheriting land discovered that his widowed mother, with the advice of the curate and unknown to himself until the last moment, had "signed it over" to his younger brother who wished to marry. In his rage, the betrayed man threatened the priest who came to pacify him, and the following day he was removed to a mental institution. The folk accuse the curate of "forcing" the doctor to commit their neighbor, on the pretext that on occasion he acted "strangely" and held himself aloof from many of his fellows. Six months later he was released from the hospital as normal—according to Irish law which states that a patient under observation cannot be institutionalized for more than that period if declared sane—and he emigrated to England. Whether or not the curate prevailed on the doctor can never be known, but the islanders believe that he did and can cite equally extreme cases involving other priests and funtionaries. The curate in question soon afterward was committed to the "madhouse" himself, which was, according to the folk, a form of divine punishment.

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Anti-clerical sentiment is strong in Inis Beag, although it is seldom manifested in acts of overt resistance to the will of the curate. An outsider must be careful not to voice a like sentiment, or, for that matter, evince agreement with diatribes directed against the clergy by islanders with whom he is conversing, or he will evoke a spirited defense of the church and be accused of anti-clericalism—or worse. The response of the folk reveals the deeply rooted ambivalence that they feel toward the church: how they revere its doctrines yet resent many actions of its representatives. An outspoken elder told me of his views concerning the church, which are shared by most of his less "bold" comrades: "The trouble with Ireland is the priests. They took over after the famine, when the population had halved and their number had quadrupled, and broke our spirit by preaching damnation and the sinfulness of sex. We came to depend on them instead of ourselves, and today they live off us but are strangers in our midst. They should be concerned only with the salvation of our immortal souls. Birds know more about God and his wishes for man than they do. The reason that we flee the country is to escape their control and the dull life they have created."

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Criticisms of past and present curates are so numerous that only the most repeated ones, which arouse the most resentment and anger when aired, can be taken up. There is a constant plea for older priests to be assigned to Inis Beag—men who have experienced life elsewhere in Ireland and abroad and know its countless facets, and who have developed compassion for the human condition—rather than the "young, pink-cheeked Maynooth Seminary graduates" who often are assigned. As well as being youthful and naive, the folk feel that too many priests have acted aloof and supercilious, have been unhappy with their Inis Beag post, and have marked time waiting for their tenure to end. Their lack of commitment has meant, it is believed, frequent shirking of their duties toward

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

the folk. Chronic negligence in the care of chapel and school is regarded as a symptom of the indifference of the clerics (or laziness, according to some), as is their seeming unwillingness to provide leadership at crucial times. The intrusion of the clergy into spheres of island life where their influence is unwarranted, according to local opinion, and their methods of controlling behavior give rise to the greatest amount of criticism, but need not be considered further at this juncture. As elsewhere in Ireland, and a source of countless humorous anecdotes and jokes, the style of life of many priests contributes to anti-clericalism. The comfort of the curates' home (particularly the new one erected since 1960, by one islander called "the house indulgences built"), their menu, their offering of tobacco and whiskey to guests, their visits to mainland, Continent, and even America, are all discussed frequently and resentfully by the folk.

Linked with the much criticized life style of clerics are the many demands made on the islanders for monetary contributions. It is felt that the diocese is wealthy enough to support the parish priest and his curates and need not "keep the people poor" by forcing them to donate money and services without charge for their upkeep. In addition to regular offerings on Sunday, the people are called on to proffer more substantial sums at Christmas, Easter, and on several other occasions during the year. My wife and I made donations at Christmas and Easter despite the urging of many not to do so—"You are hated by the priests, so why give them money?" The names of contributors and their donations are announced from the pulpit or posted in the chapel. This practice is another control technique of sorts and infuriates many of the folk.

Other major sources of antagonism toward the clergy are their poor Gaelic and the fact that they urge the people to speak only Irish yet converse among themselves in English; their criticism of valued island customs, particularly of pagan reinterpretations; their conservatism and resistance to change, which results in the folk being ill prepared to emigrate when they must; their susceptibility to influence by the king, especially those who are newly graduated and are uncertain of themselves and their role; and their demands on canoe crews which must row them back and forth to Inis Thiar and other islands, often in dangerous weather. A conception of what the curate "ought to be like" was voiced by a pious but troubled woman: "He should be humble, not have money when so many poor are about, not treat the people as inferior, and not be afraid to work hard."

It is difficult to ascertain today whether the headmaster or the king should be accorded the dominant position, after the curate, in the informal social control system of Inis Beag; for in recent years, the power and prestige of the former have been waxing and those of the latter waning. Headmasters were formerly older men with families whose tenure was long, who were much involved in local affairs and worked closely with the curate, who were politically active and backed candidates and tried to influence island voters, and who maintained social distance although considered "one of the people." For their teaching and other services, they were provided with food, given *curach* transportation without charge, and afforded other amenities by the folk. The house that they and their families occupied until recently is located in Castle Village, near both the old and new schools, and was owned by the diocese. Headmasters now are younger and often single, and are

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

624 875 [793] [554] more independent of the curate (One in recent years quit his post, it is held, because he chafed at restrictions imposed on him by the priest.); also, they are apolitical and participate less in the gamut of local affairs. The prestige of the headmaster derives from his having been selected by the parish priest who supports his actions, his status as a "scholar," and the discipline that he exerts in the school with its vestigial effects on those who have graduated. Few islanders will openly contest his decisions in school and in civic matters.

The important nonacademic tasks performed by the headmaster are signing official forms—a duty that he shares with the bailiff, drawing up and witnessing the signing of wills, writing letters for the islanders, especially those directed to the county council and departments of the central government, and giving advice on such matters as the advisability of emigrating and of matrimonial matches. [591] Like the curates, the headmasters seldom have tried to direct community projects and social affairs, other than dances and inter-island competitions. The present headmaster considers himself atypical in many respects, in that he is youthful, has exceptional skill in playing the accordion, likes companionship and the festivities of party and pub, and has rapport with older boys and young men with whom he associates more than did his predecessors; as a result, he is the prime mover in social events—organizing dances and donating his musical talent. Older islanders often find him aloof and will apologize for "taking his time" when seeking favors of him.

875 593 Parents have little contact with the headmaster as regards the education of their children, and, although permitted and sometimes urged to do so, they seldom visit the school. They will consult with him about such matters as health problems of their children, but not about educational policies; nor do they complain to him 875 of his role as pedagogue—"What the teacher does is right." Because of the severity 876 of his discipline, and that of the other two teachers, and the fear that it arouses in [861] his pupils, parents use him as a threat in disciplining their children at home. This [123] is a distinction that he shares with the nurse and her hypodermic needle and me with my large size and robust manner; being the ominous *Fear an Stáisiún* ("Man of the Station," because my wife and I rented for a time an apartment in the coast guard station) made it difficult for me to obtain young people as respondents until many months had passed. As a result of the rigid discipline exerted in the school, maintained by actions which include even whipping and priestly imprecation, a degree of orderliness, quietness, and attentiveness on the part of the students is achieved which would arouse incredulity among American teachers and parents [171] unless witnessed. Discipline in the school merely reflects that in the home, and a favorite pastime of Irish living in the vicinity of Shannon Airport is to observe the interaction of American parents and their usually obstreperous offspring in the transient room there.

624 [829] Whereas the headmaster attracts the least amount of anti-authority sentiment of any other figure who regulates to a marked degree the lives of the folk, the king attracts the most. The latter is the senior of the two publicans, in age and role, whose home in Low Village accommodates guests as well as the shop and [123] pub. Information concerning him was as difficult to come by as that concerning curates whom I knew, in that he resented my presence and refused to cooperate

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

> conditions appraised. . The community regulates its internal affairs through the *cuaird* as well. It is here public opinion is formulated. There is nothing formal about the decisions made upon the incidents arising from d- to day The local community has no implement with which to enforce its will But it has the power of gossip and boycott (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:190–191).

Decisions of this sort and their sanctions in Inis Beag rest largely in the hands of government officials and the priest, headmaster, and king.

Many folk long have believed that the island needs a council with representatives from each of the four villages serving on it, to foster cooperation and to formulate policies which bear on the welfare of all. After independence in 1922, a move was made to form such a council, but the civil war interrupted the process; since that time, according to the islanders, the opposition of curates and king, none of whom have wanted their vested interests threatened, has succeeded in blocking the formation of such a body. Other forces at work, however, are the lassitude and ambivalence toward authority of the people, and their dislike and jealousy of one another They complain of the lack of leadership, or of the "wrong" kind of leadership, as in the case of the priest and king; but they are unable or unwilling to expend the energy needed to get themselves organized and "pull together" for the common good. Often those who advocate the formation of a council will, in the next breath, express their dislike or distrust of its potential members, or a desire to remain independent of its collective will should it run contrary to their own. A vacationing emigrant who said, "We have no sense of civic pride and responsibility but think only of ourselves.", assessed the situation accurately

Among the traits attributed to Inis Beag folk by nativists and primitivists are self-reliance, independence, and individualism. But the self-reliance of the islanders has become undermined increasingly since 1891 by a benevolent government; their independence is severely curtailed by restrictions imposed on them by curate, headmaster, king, and their fellows; and their individualism is a figment of literary imagination disguising a strict conformism. Inis Beag as much as any community is characterized by gossip, ridicule, and opprobrium, which gain their effectiveness as social control mechanisms from the deep concern of the folk with "saving face," and which serve to limit freedom of action and behavioral idiosyncracy. When asked to rank the major deficiencies of island life, the people almost without exception place the prevalence of malicious gossiping, along with poverty and the intrusion of the clergy into secular affairs, at the head of their list.

No matter how much the islanders detest gossiping when they are its victims, they nevertheless welcome every opportunity to engage in it. News of an event passes quickly by word of mouth from Low to Terrace Villages, and variations in the description of the event are usually numerous due to the distortions of rumor. In order to circumvent gossip, parties are organized at the last moment and invitations issued by small boys moving quietly from door to d- in the night; persons will leave the island—sometimes to emigrate, visit the hospital with a serious illness, or enter an order—without previous announcement, running from their homes to the strand to board the last canoes for the steamer; and mail is posted just prior to the arrival of the steamer and picke- up immediately after it

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

declining steadily, and between 1951 and 1960 there were only nine marriages between folk who remained in the island—and since then but five.

The prevalence of celibacy and late marriage is a matter of grave concern to the people. My analysis of these phenomena reveals over 20 contributing factors, of which I will consider only the most important—and these briefly, since most of them will be addressed further within the contexts of the family, personality, and emigration. The one most often voiced by the islanders is the emigration of girls in increasing numbers at younger ages; of the nine girls eligible for marriage, only one is older than 25 years, and several are contemplating emigration. The folk are much less prone to talk of the single estate and late marriage than they are of emigration, which share many of the same causes, and they appear to know fewer of the causes of the former and are less willing to assign relative weights when assessing them. The cause of all three conditions most often cited by both writers and social scientists is the system of inheritance, whereby land cannot be subdivided but is passed on to one son who must wait to marry until his father dies or is willing (or forced) to pass on the land, and his siblings have married or emigrated. By this time, the son is usually middle-aged and cautious in making his choice of a spouse. Most fathers in Inis Beag are loath to surrender their property, and with it control of the family, to sons wishing to marry, and some even will postpone receiving the old age in order to maintain their status position past the age of 70 years. A father who does not choose a successor among several sons until late in his life—which is a common occurrence—can retard their marriages if they choose to "wait it out." Equally loath to disturb the family *status quo* is the mother, who fears not only the loss of her commanding position in the household, but the loss of her son's affection to an incoming daughter-in-law. The man who wishes to marry and is prevented from doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of gossip, and his plight is regarded as a "shame."

Since late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. That the folk are aware of this cause is attested by their frequent advice to offspring that they postpone marriage to conform to island tradition. This advice invariably is buttressed by a rationale of males not having enough "sense" to marry until they approach the age of 40 years. Reflected in the rationale is the system of male age grading conceptualized in Inis Beag: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until 40 years of age, an adult until 60 years, middle-aged until 80, and old-aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist who comes from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). Another rationale for late marriage often heard in Inis Beag is the impossibility of divorce in Catholic Ireland, which demands that the choice of a spouse be well considered. It appears that this argument is usually used to explain late marriage when other factors are in fact responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades.

Two closely linked causes of celibacy and late marriage seldom broached in Inis Beag are male solidarity and the unwillingness of many men to accept the responsibilities of marriage, particularly its sexual responsibilities. Marriage is looked on with trepidation, or at least as something less than desirable. The marriageable man in his late twenties and thirties is usually sexually repressed to an unbelieve-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

able degree, has been dominated by parents who have allowed him to take on few major responsibilities, has a mother who acts as a wife surrogate in all but the sexual sphere (at least consciously), has established a routinized existence, and has male companions for whom he feels affection and with whom he shares numerous work and recreational activities. Some men who have been promised or willed land, and who have consenting parents and brides-to-be, will balk at a match because they are "too happy with the lads," and, if persuaded to marry, they will attempt to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage—"The men run with the boys before marriage and carry on the same afterward." Several bachelors and spinsters almost have married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment on each occasion too difficult to make at the last moment.

Before the coming of a permanent priest to Inis Beag, it is asserted that young people contemplating marriage were able to "keep company" frequently and openly before the union was arranged, and that some pairings were "love matches." But since then—with the separation of the sexes from late infancy on, the ubiquity of gossip and opprobrium, and the actions of priests—courting almost has disappeared, and it is not uncommon for a couple awaiting their wedding to have little personal knowledge of one another. Contact on the island between the sexes today is limited to meetings at the few parties which take place, at the occasional summer dances, or *céilí*, held on a large flagging near the school, and sometimes "at the well" or "walking to the cow" during daylight hours. Two generations ago, private Sunday afternoon strolls afforded young men and women the opportunity of coming to know one another well, but these "rambles" about the island are done now only by couples of the same sex—one of the several manifestations of institutionalized friendship. Choice once again seems to be intruding into matchmaking, however, with the increasing demands of acculturated youths for marriage with "love."

Matches are the end product either of secret bargaining between the families involved which can extend for weeks, or of the impetuous act of a man who—goaded by companions or by stout, or both—will visit the home of his "chosen" after dark to negotiate, accompanied by a kinsman or close friend. The bargain, once made, is sealed by the male participants with the emptying of a bottle of whiskey brought by the prospective groom, after which a boy or young man of the household is sent out—often after midnight—to summon relatives and acquaintances for a night long party, known as the *cleamhnas* (the word for matchmaking in Gaelic). Sometimes this party is followed by as many as three more on consecutive nights, the expense for which is borne by the family of the bride-to-be. When the bargaining is protracted, it usually is done during the 12 days of Christmas or the final fortnight of Lent, and the match is announced soon after Epiphany or Easter. Hearsay concerning possible matches abounds at these times, but each year "most rumors are dry," unless, of course, "with a lot of drinking and urging a man might decide to take the plunge." It was customary in the past for the wedding to take place four days after the *cleamhnas*, but now the service must wait from one to three weeks until the genealogies of the families of the bride and groom are examined by the parish priest to determine their degree of consanguinity.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

581 Marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare in folk societies throughout the world, and this is illustrated in Inis Beag by two statements made to me by middle-aged, married men: one said that marriage is a matter of "making a good living," and the other that the attributes of an ideal wife are, "She keeps the fire going, has the tea ready, and listens to a man's troubles." Performing economic tasks, satisfying sexual needs, and rearing children are the *raison d'etre* for women according to most island men, but this does not mean 581 that affection between spouses is lacking. The relationship between most mates, 593 however, is one of "accommodation," and the affection, if present, lacks depth. It is said that "husbands and wives never walk together;" but my wife and I have observed two couples who often fail to observe this dictum, between whom conjugal love as defined in the Western tradition appears to exist. Intimate communication between mates is rare, as it is between most folk—including even mothers and sons and those who are allied through institutionalized friendship. [578] Several disputing husbands and wives have not spoken to one another, except formally, for many years. In the case of disputes of this sort—as well as those involving other kin in the household—the parties involved limit as much as possible both contact and cooperation between themselves rather than resort to abusive [164] argument. Physical assault is unusual, but that the repressed wish to perpetrate violence may be widespread is attested by the delirious response of the islanders to the plot of John M. Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, when related to them; in it peasants of Co. Mayo laud the youthful "playboy, Christy" for apparently "slaying his da" (father) with a "loy" (spade). The act which so horrified viewers of nativistic persuasion in Dublin and Boston half a century ago arouses the opposite effect among the folk.

593 Women commonly express jealousy of and resentment against not only 461 what they consider the less time consuming and stressful work load of men, but 152 also the greater freedom enjoyed by their husbands. Many times women confided [662] to my wife that they are greatly distressed at being forced to remain home minding their children and performing tedious household chores, while their spouses range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits and are involved • 829 in numerous social activities forbidden by custom to women. Some of these same 593 women expressed deep concern over being compelled by the unauthorized decree 562 of local curates, as well as by the sexual demands of their mates, to produce as [858] many offspring as possible; they complained that the constant bearing and rearing of children increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty 461 of their families. Few men whom we questioned were aware—or were willing to 562 admit—that such sentiments are held by their wives, but most men cited as one of the more attractive aspects of local life their being bossed by no one and being able to shift from one job to another among a wide variety to avoid boredom. Men are away from their homes much of the time, day and night, and they do far more "social" walking about the island, visiting relatives and acquaintances, and going to Inis Thiar and the mainland than do their spouses. Also, they frequent the pubs and attend the summer *céilí* on the common land, which married women do not.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

The islanders know little of church dogma and the purport of rituals and feast days. What knowledge they do possess often is distorted, and they seldom read the Bible or manuals of instruction or engage in doctrinal discussions among themselves. I discovered by consulting priests and church histories, dictionaries, and exegeses—both before and during my stay in Inis Beag—that I came to know far more about the faith than any of the folk, and I sometimes imparted what I had learned to the curious in homes and even in the pubs. Instruction is welcomed by the islanders, but they dislike criticism from any quarter of their idiosyncratic Catholic observances, pagan retentions and reinterpretations, and non-Christian behavior. They also dislike being told, especially by returned emigrants, that "Catholic culture" in Ireland is quite unlike that in other parts of the world and arouses dismay and even incredulity in many foreign Catholics who visit Ireland.

The paths to salvation, according to the islanders, are threefold: obeying the curate, performing the rituals of the church diligently and punctiliously, and conforming to the moral laws of Christianity. Being saved, however, is to them much more a matter of escaping Hell than of achieving Purgatory and eventually Heaven, and they experience more anxiety about failing to conform to the moral laws than pride in conforming to them. Furthermore, it is sins of thought rather than sins of deed which preoccupy them. While they boast of their morality as expressed in behavior, they labor under a heavy burden of guilt arising out of repressed sexual desires, jealousy and envy of their neighbors, and anti-clerical sentiment, among other attitudes. It is difficult for most of them to confess these to the priest, and thus their feelings of guilt and fear of damnation are compounded. Many times in Inis Beag I heard a "good Catholic" defined as one who "thinks mostly of death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell" and guides his conduct accordingly. Life on earth is regarded as merely a brief prelude to the "eternity stretching beyond the grave," to be lived only in preparation for the Day of Judgment and borne patiently in all its "pain and suffering." Priests and nuns are envied for many reasons, among them the fact that they can "spend most of their time preparing for death" and thus are in a better position to achieve salvation.

It is apparent to outside observers and to the folk alike that women are more pious than men. They attend church more regularly, are more serious of mien at mass and during other religious observances, and are more prone to talk of religious matters than men. Many women go to mass daily, and it is said that all of the women of the island, but only ten men, have evaded going to Hell magically by attending mass nine Fridays in succession after Ash Wednesday (or, according to some, the first Friday in each month for nine successive months, or the first Friday after Ash Wednesday for nine years in succession). The reasons for this are several, but the most important are that women are less contented than men and thus have a greater need for the solace that religion affords, and they are more restricted socially than men and by fulfilling various church obligations can escape household confinement and interact with other women. Some islanders are thought to be overly pious—"wear their religion on their sleeves"—and are subjects of amusement and derision; those who use piety to cloak avarice

16:Messenger E-4.5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

to put their property in a state of good repair, which, in retrospect, is regarded as a benefit, however much they might have complained of the labor involved during the previous weeks.

The sacred well, probably appropriated from the Druids 13 centuries ago, still attracts the folk and occasionally pilgrims from Inis Thiar and other islands. On the mainland, patterns often were associated with holy wells named after saints, but this does not seem to have been the case in Inis Beag. It was customary until about ten years ago for those who came to pray here to attach bits of cloth, rosaries, or sacred objects obtained from holy places of pilgrimage on the mainland and abroad, but this practice was halted by the clergy as smacking of paganism. Now it is visited for religious purposes mostly by small groups on Sunday afternoon, and by persons about to emigrate and their families who come to pray for the good fortune of the soon departed. The water in the spring is not considered holy, but capable of "bringing the grace of God and the saint," and if it is drunk during prayer, it is believed to be especially efficacious for curing sterility, among other afflictions. In this century, a partially blind islander is believed to have regained his sight after paying nine visits to the well on successive Sundays, and other miraculous cures from earlier times are reported. Those who come to the spring always seek a tiny fish or eel in the water, which, if observed, is merely a good omen to some but an assurance of reaching Heaven to others. Attaching rags to the well and seeking cures and omens there are all examples of reinterpretation. The spring also is used as a source of water by farmers who pasture stock in nearby fields and by thirsting passersby.

Pagan Supernaturalism

Pagan supernaturalism is disavowed by the folk, and it is difficult to know how widely held are beliefs in this sphere. That they are held is indisputable, as attested by the active efforts of curates up to this day to eradicate them. Youth of the island overtly deny the existence of other than church approved spiritual entities, although the most outspoken disclaimer of paganism among them is visited occasionally by the ghost of his father, who urges the continuation of a family feud. But elders cling tenaciously to indigenous beliefs and practices, about which they are extremely secretive for fear of being ridiculed by outsiders and their more skeptical fellows. Defensive about being labeled backward, the islanders feel that the "superstitions" they are said to hold most contribute to this impression. When the folk talk of pagan retentions and reinterpretations, they ascribe them to those who lived at the time that their parents or grandparents did, or to certain of their superstitious contemporaries. A notorious dissenter, who sometimes has occasion to patrol the shores of Inis Beag before dawn, antagonizes his neighbors by deriding them for their fear of venturing after dark to the back of the island, where fairies and ghosts hold sway. On telling him of my intention to spend a night resting atop a *clochán* near the Atlantic coast, he said, "The only thing that will happen is you'll hear the cocks crow in the morning." He is the only person who admitted to me that he disbelieves the teachings of the church concerning the soul

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

and the never ending toil needed to maintain present subsistence standards; the spying and malicious gossiping of their fellows and the ubiquity of jealousy and envy; the isolation of the island, particularly during winter months; numbing boredom and the dearth of social activities; for women, the lack of freedom and of attention and affection from their spouses, as well as the necessity of enduring sexual relations; and, as stated above, hypochondria. Much has been written about isolation and its depressive effects on the islanders, and the folk themselves constantly complain of being shut off from the world and prey to wind, rain, fog, and raging sea. But isolation need not lead inevitably to depression, for my wife and I conducted research in another island of Ireland—far distant from and even more inaccessible than Inis Beag—where the inhabitants do not feel isolated and are not depressed.

I have expanded the clinical usage of the term hypochondria to include fears of the spirit as well as fears of the body, for ill health can as often be induced by supernatural forces, and death—whether by disease, injury, or aging—is the ultimate fear with its threat of eternal damnation. Colds, influenza, dyspepsia, migraine headaches, teeth decay, the crippling effects of joint and muscle ailments, hypermetrophy, and mental illness are paramount among health concerns. "Flu" epidemics are frequent in the island and are a chief cause of death among people who have become weakened by old age. As the folk advance in years, they come to spend more time in bed and by the turf fire and venture out less during the winter and when it rains. Drafts are avoided whenever possible, and clothes dampened by seas which wash the canoes or by rain are changed for dry ones at the first opportunity. Colds, flu, indigestion, and headaches more than any other afflictions send the islanders to the nurse for drugs and to their own folk remedies for relief. Dyspepsia is known as "wind" and is thought to result from diet, but the nurses say that most cases of indigestion are the result of tension—"nervous stomach." Nine cases of migraine were reported in Inis Beag during 1959, but many other islanders, most of whom are women, suffer from "nervous headache" which can approach migraine in intensity of pain. Neither my wife nor I were ill during the winter of 1959 and 1960, even though we were abroad in all sorts of inclement weather against the advice of our neighbors; when we began picking wild garlic to season our food, it was reasoned that the condiment afforded us protection against the flu, which reached almost epidemic proportions that year, and as a result this folk medicine was used more widely and consistently than usual.

Nativists and primitivists praise the health and hardiness of the folk and boast of the absence of rheumatism and allied infirmities among them and the sharpness of their sight. But, just as most adults past 30 years of age suffer from decay and loss of teeth, they also suffer from muscle and joint ailments, caused by the "damp and cold," and from far-sightedness. It is not known how many folk wear glasses in the privacy of their homes, but only two persons, both men, wear them publicly—and self-consciously when they do. Most glasses are not prescription made but are purchased in mainland shops after many pairs displayed on the counters have been tested, and often a single pair will serve the needs of all the elders of a household. The islanders among themselves constantly complain of these and other ailments, although some will praise the health and hardiness of the local

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

population in the presence of strangers, to conform to the nativistic and primitivistic stereotype. Probably the most robust of the two dozen islanders past the age of 70 years believes that he will live to be 100 years old, because he continues to be active physically and doesn't "worry about the health;" he accuses his fellows of worrying themselves into the grave" over matters of body and soul.

The etiology of mental illness as conceived by the islanders is varied and embraces both natural and spiritual realms. "Insanity" stigmatizes the victim and his family, often for many generations, no matter what its cause, and as many psychotics are treated at home—hidden from the probing eyes of strangers—as are incarcerated in the mental institution serving the region of which Inis Beag is a part. Statistics on mental disorders are hard to come by because of the opprobrium attached to insanity, but at least eight of the folk were institutionalized for various periods between 1940 and 1965. Only one of these is a woman and none were violent prior to admission. Inheritance, inbreeding, and the menopause are the natural causes most widely accepted by the islanders, but some claim that heavy blows to the head, acute alcoholism, and even prolonged emotional tension—or "nerves"—can induce insanity. In explaining why a former Inis Beag curate was committed to a mental institution, an old man revealed what is probably the most significant cause of mental illness in Ireland when he said that the constant association of the priest with a pretty housekeeper "drove him mad from frustration;" he advocated that only elderly, plain-appearing women (who will not "gab" everything that they know to "our man") be hired for the task.

Supernatural forces are believed capable of causing not only mental illness, but most other maladies and injuries as well. Pagan dispensers of ill health are vengeful or capricious fairies, ghosts, and witches of the evil eye, while Catholicism provides an unpredictable Devil, a deity who punishes sinful thoughts and deeds in this world as well as in the next, and priests who in Inis Beag often have interpreted the boundaries of sin according to Irish and personal criteria. In the case of certain folk stricken with mental disorders, I have heard specific causes put forth to account for their condition: parents who are second cousins, the evil eye of a neighbor, punishment by God for a particular misdeed, and a priest's curse. A man who mistreated his aged bachelor uncle before his recent death now is haunted with the specter of being struck down from the grave with sickness, injury, or madness by the shade of the uncle seeking revenge. His despair and erratic behavior arouse little sympathy from his fellows, who await the day of reckoning. The stigma of mental illness arises from its designation as inheritable or a sign of the deity's displeasure, both of which may doom those of generations to come. There is a strong suspicion among the folk that other maladies which are deforming or leave physical aftereffects once cured can be transmitted through inheritance. In this category are two mongoloids, one dwarf, one epileptic, one person with goiter, one with a cleft palate, and one who has recovered from poliomyelitis. These disabilities also can stigmatize a family.

Probably the most infamous custom associated with the Irish is their excessive intake of intoxicating drink, and certainly Inis Beag islanders are no exception to the stereotype. Men drink far more than women, but even though the latter widely condemn the practice many are known to send their children to the pubs

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

5

The Future of the Island

Emigration

MANY ELDERS IN INIS BEAG fear that the island and its neighbors will go the way of the Blasket Islands of Co. Kerry, whose remaining inhabitants were removed by the government because their support had become an economic liability. With only slight fluctuations, the population of Inis Beag has been diminishing since it reached its zenith of 532 persons in 1861. Below are population figures since 1821—when the first census was compiled—until the present time:

1821	421
1841	456
1861	532
1881	497
1901	483
1926	409
1936	445
1946	447
1956	376
1960	350

The upsurge in population after 1926 reflects the depression in the United States and the Second World War, when emigrants returned home to escape unemployment and conscription, while the downsurge after 1946 reflects the shift of emigration from America to England. Frequently discussed by elders is the steady increase in emigration during the past 15 years, the decreasing age of emigrants, and the presence within the past decade—for the first time in three centuries—of aged parents all of whose children have emigrated, and of land which is idle or rented out by emigrants who probably never will return to Inis Beag. Jokes concerning the building of a hotel by the Germans or a missile site by the Americans in the island to stimulate the economy, as well as serious suggestions that the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

168
• 829 government increase its services and subsidies even more, reveal the underlying
[522] tension within those who are most strongly committed to the local tradition and wish its perpetuation.

167 The index of my field notes contains more references to emigration than
168 to any other category, for seldom in an interview, whether guided or open-ended,
829 did the topic fail to come up, no matter what was the initial subject under con-
12 sideration. Of the more than 30 causes of the phenomenon yielded by my analysis, all are known to the folk, and they are ever eager to express opinions as to the relative weights which should be attached to those that they deem significant. My wife and I usually were solicited for our opinions as well whenever the topic was addressed. I will deal below with only the major causes of emigration from Inis Beag, and will consider first those which are internal—the "push" factors—and then those which are external—the "pull" factors. The islanders emphasize external causes in their own deliberations, but those who are not apologists for the *status quo*, or who are genuinely bewildered by the exodus of young people in recent years, are able to identify the internal ones also, but are less willing to assign them sufficient weight. Emigration is the topic about which my wife and I could be most objective and outspoken concerning the role of the church and obtain the most agreement and arouse the least resentment among our respondents.

167 Paramount among the push factors are the previously considered system of
428 inheritance and the causes underlying the prevalence of celibacy, late marriage, and
589 personality depression. The fact that only one son in a family can inherit land,
592 which forces his brothers to emigrate, is the internal factor most stressed in the
[121] literature pertaining to Inis Beag, but least stressed by the folk. The reason for this is that until recently it was rather common for siblings without land to remain on the island, thanks to the benevolence of their brothers and the government and their ability to support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing
[162] shops, and obtaining remittances. Of the 71 households in Inis Beag, 28 are headed by male siblings: 20 in which 10 pairs of brothers and their families live, 3 in which 3 pairs of bachelor siblings reside, 3 in which 3 brothers and their families live, and 2 in which 3 siblings reside—two as bachelors in one and
[182] the third with his family in the other. It is apparent that other factors, of equal or greater importance, are stimulating emigration.

167 The push factor given the most weight by the islanders is the unwillingness
168 of men to marry—"The lads are too fussy, and the girls get tired of waiting and
581 go off." But the fact that male "fussiness" is based on such conditions as parents
[829] opposing the marriage of their sons for various reasons and bachelors being loath
[162] to assume the responsibilities of marriage, especially its sexual responsibilities, seldom is probed. Sometimes it is the girls who are accused of "putting off" potential spouses by being too discriminating, but this accusation becomes untenable when one observes that there is but a single unmarried woman between the ages of 26 and 44 years in Inis Beag (as compared to 18 men), and that the average age at which women emigrate has dropped from 24.5 years during the 1941–1950 decade to 21.1 during the last decade (as compared to 24.9 to 23.8 for men). Some girls admit that they are emigrating because the possibility of their being asked to marry is remote, but far more of them are dissatisfied with the lot of married

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

women in the island and are attracted by what they consider to be a more rewarding life on the mainland and abroad, and so emigrate for these reasons. One of the most "pitied" girls in the island is a returned emigrant to the United States, who, despite being 24 years of age and suitable for marriage in every way, is not being courted, although it is known that she came back to Inis Beag to obtain a husband.

All of the conditions making for personality depression—the intrusion of priests into secular affairs, hypochondria, malicious gossiping, poverty, boredom, and isolation—also instigate emigration. My analysis assigns the secular excesses of the clergy and their implementation of the Jansenist doctrines of the Catholic Church in Ireland as the primary push factors in emigration and supports the contention made by Paul Blanshard that, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954:154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard as regards all of Ireland is very much a reality in Inis Beag.

Other internal factors accounting for emigration which are considered important by the folk are the deadening of initiative by government services and subsidies and the institutionalization of emigration itself. While many islanders believe that the government ought to support even further the local economy in order to combat emigration, others feel that its present level of benevolence has had a deleterious effect on their character. Young people observing the indolence of their elders, according to this opinion, are shamed into seeking a more active life away from Inis Beag. In my estimation, this is a superficial cause, but the institutionalization of emigration is a vital factor, more recognized by youth than by their parents. Just as in the case of late marriage, emigration since famine times gradually has become an expectation—a "way of life"—and it will stimulate some folk to leave even though, in the estimation of their fellows, it might be advantageous for them to remain. When a young man says that he has an "itch to go to England and work for a spell," he usually is being motivated in this manner.

Among the external causes of emigration, the most significant are the growth of prosperity on the mainland and abroad, the influence of ever increasing numbers of tourists who visit and returned emigrants who come for short stays or to retire in Inis Beag, the impact of the mass media of communication, and the increasing availability of scholarship funds for children to attend secondary schools on the mainland. The United States has been a land of freedom, opportunity, and prosperity to the Irish since the early seventeenth century, but particularly during and after the famine (Approximately 1,000,000 Irish emigrated between 1846 and 1851, and another 1,500,000 perished from hunger, according to Woodham-Smith 1962:411.). The first record of substantial emigration from Inis Beag is in 1822, and from that time until the Second World War most islanders migrated to the United States, never to return. However, with the growth of prosperity in England after 1946, the stream of emigration shifted in that direction. Not only did jobs become plentiful across the Irish Sea then, but large, viable ethnic communities served by Irish clergy had sprung up in the larger cities. It became possi-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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178 ble to visit Inis Beag frequently, as the cost and distance are slight compared to a journey across the Atlantic.

The many vacationing emigrants who now return to the island at Christmas or Easter or during the summer months often succeed in persuading relatives and acquaintances to return to England with them. Those so persuaded declare that they will return soon with their "fortunes" to settle permanently, but they seldom do once "emancipated." Since the Second World War, several Americans have returned home, and their stories of life in the United States make the youth restive. Tourists who remain for weeks and months in Inis Beag and come to know many islanders also sow the seeds of discontent. A favorite subject of talk in the pubs is the relative advantages to be gained from migrating to particular cities in England and America, and anthropologists as well as returned emigrants are called on as consultants in this matter by youths.

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207 Almost every cottage in Inis Beag has a radio, or "wireless," and although the folk seldom read books, a wide assortment of domestic and foreign magazines and newspapers find their way into most homes. These mass media also are an emancipating force making for restiveness and discontent, because they allow islanders a glimpse behind the "lace curtain" at what appears to be a happier and freer world. Television was introduced into Inis Beag in 1963 at the lighthouse, and a second set was procured for the new "dance hall" when it was completed two years later. Few islanders venture to the lighthouse to view television, but I am told by correspondents that many now visit the hall during the several evening hours when transmission from Telefis Eireann takes place. As a result, television has become an acculturative medium to be reckoned with. Both radio and television programs are censored in Ireland, but even so the morality expressed in them—especially in the sex and violence drenched American ones—presents a striking contrast to locally conceived moral precepts. A hypothetical censor from Inis Beag most certainly would create more discontinuities with his shears in television performances than would his much maligned "secularized" colleagues in Dublin. My wife and I found that viewing television with islanders at the lighthouse on two occasions was a traumatic experience; it gave us a different (and even more disquieting) perspective on programs in the United States and their enculturative effects than can be obtained at home.

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873 Since the Second World War, 28 island youths have pursued secondary education elsewhere in Ireland, either in high schools, called "colleges," or in technical schools, and most have been supported by government scholarships. The usual high school scholarship is for 5 years, and a student must be 14 years of age and qualify by competitive examination to receive one. Only 4 of these 28 students
873 —of which 2 are teachers in the national school—have returned to Inis Beag. One
[512] young man watched 2 girls, either of whom he eventually might have married, go off to the mainland for school and said, "Scholarships are killing the island;" what he was referring to, other than his own disappointment, is the fact that 19 of the 28 students who left for advanced education are girls. The reason for the disproportionate number of girls receiving scholarships is that they are far more motivated academically and have better scholastic records than boys. There is, however,
[829] a widespread belief in the island that certain families are favored by priests and

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

teachers, whose influence and attention earn for the children of these families the greater share of scholarship funds.

Not only has education abroad been a major pull factor in emigration, but local education as well in the form of a summer language school for mainland children, which was established in 1960 and has convened for two months each year ever since. Over a hundred students—in two shifts of a month apiece—attend the school, where in addition to learning Irish formally and speaking it in the homes where they are lodged, they are instructed in singing, playing musical instruments, and set dancing in the traditional mold. Monies from Gaeltacht Eireann support the director from the mainland and the Inis Beag headmaster who teach, a skilled musician who provides music for dancing and also instructs, and the students. Eight hundred pounds were channeled into the local economy in 1960 by this nativistic endeavor hopefully aimed at propagating Gaelic and halting emigration. The influence of the visiting children, who interact with their island counterparts at home and at outdoor dances each evening, is considerable; the outsiders tend to be critical of conditions in Inis Beag and boast of the superiority in every dimension of life on the mainland. It is questionable whether the school has diminished the push effect of emigration by enlivening the social atmosphere of the island as much as it has increased the pull effect by creating even more discontent among young people. There are those who denounce the language school on the grounds that the visiting children speak more English than Irish in the local homes; that many islanders in their greed for profit do not provide adequately for the students assigned to them; and that some of the mainlanders are openly promiscuous and thus subvert the morality of Inis Beag youths.

Since 1960, priests have become more realistic in their appraisal of the causes of emigration and have taken steps to enliven further the social milieu of the island. They have been responsible for introducing set dancing and tin whistle playing instruction in the national school, for organizing yearly athletic, canoe rowing, and dancing competitions between folk of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar, for building the dance hall to serve various purposes, and for setting up a small lending library of books in the school. The hall was built with a Gaeltacht Eireann grant, the free labor of island men, and money gifts solicited from interested parties all over the world. It resembles its predecessor—the boathouse on the strand built by the coast guard company—in that it functions as dance hall, trade school, storage house, and meeting place; but it is much larger and better constructed and has many more facilities than the latter. The folk view it as a mixed blessing, for they disliked building it without being paid wages, and feel now that it is not available to them enough of the time, and when it is, they are charged by the curate to attend dances and view television. Many believe that church and government should have provided wages to the builders to compensate for farming and other time lost, and that "the key of the hall shouldn't be in the priest's pocket." Since its completion, the building has accommodated most of the activities of the language school.

In contrast to the islanders who are deeply committed to the local culture and fear that Inis Beag will become depopulated within the next generation, there

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

are those who are either indifferent to the rapid increase in emigration since 1946, or welcome it. The island has its bitter critics, even among a few of the oldest generation who regret not having emigrated when they had the opportunity. A noted craftsman, long disillusioned with island existence, is refusing to train any of his sons to carry on the family tradition of generations. English is spoken as much as Irish in the presence of children in some households so as to prepare them for eventual emigration, in spite of the protestations of some priests and neighbors who insist that the alien tongue not be spoken on moral and nativistic grounds. The language revival movement receives much criticism because it results in emigrants being placed at a disadvantage; a frequently heard utterance in Inis Beag, even among those who hesitate to use English before their offspring, is, "What good will Irish do a person?" It is customary now for emigrating youths with inadequate command of English to spend three months to a year in a mainland community—with relatives or at a job—before going on to England or America. On the mainland, they also overcome some of their shyness and feelings of inferiority and become acquainted with Western customs absent from Inis Beag.

Islanders Abroad

My wife and I obtained some emigration statistics for the siblings of all folk now living in Inis Beag. For 289 persons who emigrated between 1891 and 1958, we assembled accurate data on: community settled in abroad, occupation, marriage age, place of origin and religion of spouse, and number of offspring. Of these 289, 4.8 percent went to neighboring islands, mostly to marry; 28.0 percent to the mainland (permanently rather than to prepare for emigration from Ireland); 42.8 percent to the United States; 22.8 percent to England; 1.0 percent to Australia; and 0.6 percent to Canada and other countries. The shift of emigration from the United States to England after the Second World War is revealed by the following statistics: between 1891 and 1945, 72.4 percent of Inis Beag emigrants went to the United States and only 10.6 percent to England; but between 1946 and 1958, emigration to the United States dropped to 25.5 percent, while to England it increased to 45.1 percent. The fact that before 1946 approximately 16 percent of the islanders who emigrated remained in Ireland as compared to 28 percent after that date attests to the increasing properity in their homeland as well as abroad.

It is beyond the scope of this work to follow Inis Beag emigrants of the past and present to their destinations abroad and beyond; the causes, conditions, and consequences of emigration from Ireland to America and England are amply documented in such standard works as Cecil Woodham-Smith's *The Great Hunger*, George W. Potter's *To the Golden Door*, William V. Shannon's *The American Irish*, Arnold Schrier's *Ireland and the American Emigration*, and John A. Jackson's *The Irish in Britain*. But, in closing chapter and book, I would like to discuss two additional sets of statistics which have an important bearing on Inis Beag culture and personality and which, as far as I know, have never been compiled systematically for any body of emigrants from a particular locality of Ireland. One

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

set deals with the place of origin and the religion of men and women whom islanders marry outside of Ireland, and the other concerns the frequency of marriage among those who have left the country.

Emigrants from Inis Beag have settled, for the most part, in Irish ethnic communities—near relatives—in large cities and their environs of the United States, England, Australia, and Canada. In the United States, these are greater Boston, Hartford, greater New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Oakland. The majority of them have had their transportation overseas paid for by relatives who emigrated before them and in whose communities they have made their new homes, and the first order of business for the newcomers is to repay the loans made to them for the journey. Of the first generation arrivals, 37.4 percent of them did not marry; of the remainder, 10.7 percent married fellow Inis Beag emigrants, 14.3 percent persons from Inis Thiar and other nearby islands, 40 percent Irish from the mainland, 8.9 percent Irish-Americans of the second generation and beyond, and 9.5 percent non-Irish. The unknown category is 16.6 percent and includes emigrants who no longer are in contact with their families in Inis Beag or who have married Protestants. As to the former, it is common for men to sever relations with their kinsmen at home when their mothers die, and even some daughters do so after they have been abroad a few years, especially those who have married non-Catholics or "foreigners." This reflects the Oedipus complex and religious and ethnic biases in the Inis Beag family, and runs counter to the assumption of nativists, primitivists, and functionalists who stress the strength of family ties in Ireland. The folk claim that no emigrant in human memory has married a Protestant, but I learned from islanders who had settled for many years in American communities of at least six who had done so.

Not only are the folk secretive about those of their number who have married Protestants after emigrating, but also about emigrants who have "lost the faith." By and large, these are young people who have emigrated to England since 1946; it seems that youthful emigrants before that time remained loyal Catholics, as have those who have gone to the United States recently. The widespread disaffection of Irish Catholics in Britain frequently is discussed in Inis Beag, and is blamed on the anonymity and "temptations" provided by the city. The "priest and gossip keep us faithful here" were the words of a man concerned about the rumored disaffection of his son in London.

During my last visit to Inis Beag in 1965, I discussed with over a dozen islanders some of the statistics that I had compiled previously and have reported herein. Without telling them the results of my analysis, I asked them whether more folk remained single in Inis Beag or abroad, and without exception they made the first choice. Their collective opinion is summed up by the remark of one that, "Here the old people interfere. They don't want to give up the land, and they don't want a new girl to come in. In America, the kids make up their own minds." Social scientists long have assumed that when emigrants from Ireland settle elsewhere, they soon come to marry as early and frequently as the people among whom they live, mostly because of changing economic conditions. But a single rate of 37.4 percent abroad, as compared to 28.6 percent in Inis Beag, belies both common and scientific sense. Certainly factors more important than economic ones

Sex and Repression in an Irish Folk Community

Celts. But local legend, historical evidence, and genealogical data collected by my wife and me indicate that the present population is descended from immigrants who came to the island from many parts of Ireland following the Cromwellian incursion of the seventeenth century. The islanders still express bitterness over conditions of poverty and servitude experienced by their ancestors during the 300 years that they lived under absentee Anglo-Irish landlords. All of the excesses of foreign domination suffered by mainland peasants were suffered by the inhabitants of Inis Beag, but were aggravated by the ordinary hardships of island living. Little was known about events in Inis Beag during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries until the island was visited by archeologists and publicized in their scientific writings. The surrounding area of the mainland was very much isolated and seldom visited at that time, although trading between Inis Beag and nearby communities was carried on, and passing ships sometimes called at the island.

Agricultural pursuits have always dominated the subsistence economy of Inis Beag. Most householders own land on which they grow potatoes and other vegetables, grass, and sometimes rye and sally rods and where they pasture cattle, sheep, goats, asses, and horses. The back of the island, behind the communities, is divided into four strips, and each landowner possesses numerous plots located along the "quarter" on which his village fronts. The average combined holding is sixteen acres, and almost 50 percent of the land is composed of arable indigenous and manufactured soils. Potatoes are the staple crop, and they are supplemented by various other vegetables, milk from cattle and goats, meat from island sheep, fish, eggs, and other foods, many of which are imported and sold in the shops. Rye is grown for thatching, and sally rods are used to weave several types of containers. Other subsistence activities (which also provide income for some folk) are knitting, weaving, crocheting, tailoring, and sandal making.

A slowly expanding cash economy features the export of cattle and sheep fattened on the island and of surplus potatoes and fish, the collection of seaweed for extraction of iodine at a mainland factory, the keeping of tourists in private homes, and the manufacturing of craft objects for sale to visitors and for export. At the turn of the century, fishing from canoes—with nets and lines often many miles out in the ocean—was an important subsistence and income activity. A few islanders who owned little or no land lived primarily by fishing and kelp-making. But over the past few decades, fish have become less plentiful and the weather more inclement, especially during winter

months; less than a dozen crews now fish regularly, and most fish are consumed locally rather than exported. Government subsidies of many sorts and remittances from relatives who have emigrated supplement the cash economy. The government further aids the islanders by not collecting "rates" and by setting low rents on land. Income information is as difficult to come by as data on sex, disputes, and pagan religious retentions; since the people do not wish to jeopardize their unemployment benefits (most of them receive the "dole") and old age pensions and fear taxation in the future, they are secretive about sources and amounts of income.

More important than the formal political structure of Inis Beag are the local informal system and social control techniques of gossip, ridicule, satire, and the like. Crime is rare in Inis Beag, and there are no "guards" stationed there. The island is seldom visited by politicians, and many inhabitants are either apathetic or antagonistic toward the county and national governments. Those asked to account for their antigovernment attitude cite widespread nepotism and corruption among officials, the slight differences between the platforms of the two major parties, and "foolish" government schemes in Inis Beag—usually instituted without consulting the islanders. Government aid is sought and even expected as a "right," but it is seldom considered adequate. Taxation in any form, especially of tobacco and stout, is bitterly opposed.

The informal political system is dominated by the curate, the "headmaster" of the national school, and a self-appointed local "king." In the past, the amount of influence exerted by curates has varied; some have been concerned mostly with fulfilling spiritual responsibilities, while others have attacked by sermon, threat, and even physical action such activities as courting, dancing, visiting, gossiping, and drinking spirits. Anticlerical sentiment (seldom manifested in overt acts) is as strong as, or stronger than, its antigovernment counterpart. The clergy are said to interfere too much in secular affairs, to live too "comfortably," to be absent from the island too often, and to act overly aloof and supercilious. The most outspoken anticlerics assert that curates have employed informers, allocated indulgences, withheld the sacraments, and placed curses ("reading the Bible at") in their efforts to regulate the secular life of Inis Beag. The headmaster, appointed and rigidly supervised by the parish priest and curate, presides over social events and serves as an adviser to the islanders in many matters, in addition to carrying out his official duties.

Inis Beag lacks a class system, and the status symbols which affect

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inis Beag

identification, varying in a continuum from repressed and latent homosexual balances through to added displacements and distortions that are either pallid asexuality or fearful and bizarre misidentifications. Since the culture does not condone sexual expression or postpones and then rigidly defines it in marriage . . . latent homosexual balances [were hypothesized] for this group, no overtly sought interpersonal manifestations, and a facade of asexual misogyny varied only by the most personalized and bizarre female identifications. . . . [The] basic personality has stamped into it such feelings as male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females, and the kind of latent homosexual feelings which produce a further sense of sin and guilt (Opler and Singer 1956: 15–18).

Among the seven diagnostic variables utilized by the researchers, the Irish patients ranked highest in the "Sin, Sex, and Guilt Ideology" (93 percent of the sample) and "Homosexuality Types" (90 percent of the sample latent, none overt) categories.

Complementing the Oedipus complex in the etiology of sexual puritanism is male solidarity. It has a long history in Ireland—revealed in legend and modern literature alike—and is instrumental in delaying marriage and making for marital maladjustment. Freudian psychologists see it as one of the many possible by-products of the "universal" Oedipus complex—"male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females, and . . . latent homosexual feelings"; but many anthropologists (especially structural-functionalists) analyze it as a sociocultural phenomenon, for it is found in societies in which the Oedipal configuration appears not to exist. Elizabeth Coxhead, in discussing Lady Gregory's play, *Grania,* alludes to the tragic plight of most Irish women, past and present.

Grania is . . . a play in which a woman is ousted from an emotional relationship between two men. The "love" is that of man for man, of brother for brother; it is loyalty to the warrior band, and a corresponding resentment of the woman who takes away the warrior's freedom, makes trouble with his comrades, distracts him from his purpose in life. It is an attitude which filters through the play as light filters through crystal; which runs through the heroic Irish sagas. . . . Its continuing validity was borne out by all Lady Gregory had observed in the world around her, the world of the "loveless Irishman," the peasant society which relegated women to serfdom, the middle-class intellectual society which left them only donkey-work. . . . such a view of the Irishwoman's role, of her relegation to insignificance and her resentment under it, is not exclusively feminine. It is abundantly confirmed by Synge. His heroines . . . are creatures caged and raging, given no scope for their powers, condemned to love men who are poor things

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beside them and do not really care for them at all. O'Casey's Juno offers further positive support, and on the negative side, so to speak, are the quantities of second-rate Irish plays and stories that have for their mainspring a panic dislike of women, invariably represented as shrews, hussies, and Aunt Sallies at whom anything can be thrown. A woman has only to put her nose into a saloon bar . . . to realise that Almhuin is with us still (Coxhead 1961: 145–146).

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In concluding this section, I would like to mention briefly an ingenious hypothesis of the cause of sexual repression in Ireland, presented by Sean de Freine in *The Great Silence*. His book is the most "convincing" expression to date of what linguists (outside of Ireland) term "language determinism," a monism still popular in that country a century after the advent of the Irish nativistic movement. Displaying a lack of knowledge both of contemporary linguistic theory and of sexual ethics in the "heart of the Gaeltacht," de Freine says:

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The Irish are often accused of a Jansenist approach to sex, which is supposed to date from the French influence in the Irish Church in and just after the penal times. But this attitude did not exist in Irish Ireland and does not exist in the Gaeltacht today. It would seem as though, when English spread throughout the country, it was English Puritanism and not French Jansenism, which brought about the change. For example, certain English words with prudish connotations were accepted, with their connotations, by the Irish, while their equivalents in Irish have no such nuances. In its English setting Puritanism was kept in reasonable check by the other native traditions: In Ireland, as the old culture died, there were no such natural checks to contain it (de Freine 1966: 164).

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Space does not permit me to consider other causal factors listed earlier which are equally untenable.

SEXUAL REPRESSION: ITS INCULCATION

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The inculcation of sexual puritanism in Inis Beag must be examined in four contexts: the role of the curate, the influence of visiting missions, enculturation in the home, and what I will term "secular social control" —the behavioral regulations imposed on themselves by Inis Beag adoles-

JOHN C. MESSENGER

589 to join the priesthood; not only are spiritual blessings and prestige brought
593 to the family as a result, but their sons are at last removed from potential
[155] wives. Yet the Inis Beag man who wants to marry and is prevented from
793] doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of much gossip. Outwardly, at least, his plight is considered a "shame."

* 831 To the man in his late twenties and thirties who is secure in his
581 home and has established regularized patterns of conduct (and has a
589 mother who acts in most ways as a wife surrogate), the general responsi-
567 bilities of marriage, and specifically its sexual responsibility, are factors
[593] militating against his seeking a spouse. Some men who have land, the consent of their parents, and willing "sweethearts" will balk at a match because they are too happy "running with the lads," and if persuaded to marry, they will try to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage. It was hinted to my wife and me on several occasions that particular island celibates almost married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment too difficult to make at the last moment.

162 Three other causes of late marriage and the single estate in Inis Beag
167 must be mentioned. Girls are more dissatisfied with their future lot than
582 are boys and men and are emigrating at ever younger ages, thus sharply
589 reducing the number of eligible females. During the 1950–1959 period,
[871] the average age at which girls emigrate dropped below twenty-one years.
[484] Each year more of them attend schools on the mainland and thus are
178] more exposed to stimuli which promote emigration. Mothers are puzzled at the increasing exodus of their daughters, since women today have a far easier time than they did a generation or two ago; but some are glad
182 to see them escape the drudgery and boredom of island existence. Since
582 late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. We heard Inis Beag adults assert that marriage should be postponed to conform to island mores; this usually was buttressed by

• 829 a rationale of males not having "enough sense" to marry until they are
[561] nearly forty years of age. Reflected in this rationale is the male age-grading conceptualized by the folk: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until forty, an adult until sixty, middle-aged until eighty, and aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist approaching forty who comes
582 from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). A final cause, often
[586] articulated by the islanders, is the fact that divorce is impossible in Ireland, therefore the choice of a spouse must be well considered. It

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inis Beag

appears, however, that this argument is usually used as a rationalization for late marriage, when other causal factors are, in reality, responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades!

The population of Inis Beag has dropped from a high of 532 persons in 1861 (up 76 from the prefamine census a decade earlier) to 497 in 1881, 483 in 1901, 409 in 1926, 376 in 1956, and 350 when my wife and I were there two years later. Today, there is grave concern over the future of the island, and some folk hold that within another generation or two Inis Beag will have gone the way of the Blasket Islands. Although my wife and I isolated almost two dozen causes for the phenomena of late marriage and celibacy, over thirty interrelated causes pertain to emigration (many of those at work in the marital sphere also stimulate emigration). Once again, I will address only the principal causes and stress the role of sexual repression, dealing first with internal factors and then external ones promoting emigration.

Among internal causes, the previously considered inheritance pattern, parents who want to maintain the family status quo for various reasons, and the girls' and young women's increasing dissatisfaction with their lot figure as prominently in the emigration picture as the marital. Some Inis Beag men claim that the reason male youths are leaving the island is economic depression, caused by the collapse of kelp-making and the fishing industry. But this cause is untenable when one examines the increase in government subsidies, remittances from relatives abroad, and taxation and land rental policies; these have far more than made up for the loss of previous revenue. Real income has increased substantially, despite recent inflation, and young men are very much aware of this fact. Just as late marriage has become institutionalized over the past century, so has emigration since the first large-scale migration of islanders in 1822. Emigration is a way of life, which will stimulate some folk to leave in spite of other conditions which might lead an observer to advise their remaining.

By far the most important reason for Inis Beag's long dwindling population is the total cultural impact of sexual puritanism and the secular "excesses" of the clergy. Blanshard writes, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954: 154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard is fully confirmed by a wealth of data from Inis